

# California GARDEN

50 cents

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1972



# TOURS

Sept. 23, (Sat.) The San Diego Floral Association will conduct a tour of the Balboa Bay area. Stop enroute at Roger's Nursery, a beautiful two acre park. Highlight will be an hour and a half boat tour of Newport and Balboa, where there are many movie stars' homes and famous yachts. \$10 includes bus and boat rides. Tour starts in Balboa Park, 8:30 A.M. Pick up at La Jolla Library at 9:00 A.M. Return about 6:30 P.M.

October 21 (Sat) Queen Mary Tour: Stop for a break at the fantastic Coffee Garden, we will be guests at Ambling's beautiful landscaped nursery in Corona Del Mar. Then, on to Long Beach and the Queen Mary for lunch and the Costeau Museum Exhibit. Bus tour and Queen Mary entry, \$10. Same bus schedule.

November 18 (Sat.) Ensenada Shopping Tour: An American bus will take us to the border where modern Mexican buses will continue trip to Ensenada. Enroute there will be a coffee stop at Rosarito Beach Hotel. Luncheon reservations may be made at the world famous Ensenada French Restaurant. Transportation is \$10; lunch and shopping—no host. Tour begins at La Jolla Library at 8:30 A.M., Balboa Park at 9:00 A.M. Return about 7 P.M.

## FLOWER SHOWS

September 15—October 1: Flower and vegetable displays at the Los Angeles County Fair at the fairgrounds in Pomona. Gates open from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M.; admission.

September 22—30: Kern County Fair will include daily exhibits of arrangements and vegetables plus a display by the Kern Bonsai Society. At Bakersfield. 3—11 P.M. weekdays; 10A.M.—11P.M. weekends. Admission.

October 21—22: The Flower Arrangers Guild of San Diego will hold its fall show in the Casa del Prado, Room 101. Special features will include table, basket, oriental and driftwood arrangements. \$1 donation at door. On the 21st; 1—5 P.M. On 22nd; 10 A.M.—5 P.M.

October 29: The Convair Garden Club will stage a Fall Chrysanthemum Show in the Majorca Room of the Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego. Show hours will be from 1 PM to 5 PM.

## FLORAL MEETINGS

October 2: Palomar District Garden Clubs will hold its general meeting in the Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. The program, "Arrangements Using Black Light", will be presented by Sadako Oehler and Maisie Dodge. Luncheon will be hosted by the Point Loma Garden Club. For reservations: 222-7438.

October 8: San Diego Floral Association will hold its 65th Anniversary celebration in the SDFA office of the Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. The doors will open at 4 P.M., no formal program. Public is invited.

October 17: The monthly meeting of the San Diego Floral Association will convene at 7:30 PM in Room 101 of Casa Del Prado. Speaker of the evening will be Mr. Ed. Bichowsky of Butler Mills; his topic will be "WHAT'S NEW ?" It is rumored that his presentation will include information on an effective new method for retarding growth of plants, shrubs, and trees. This should be interesting and purposeful to all gardeners of this area.. Put the meeting time and date on your calendar. Admission is free to all.

November 2: The Flower Arrangers Guild of San Diego will hold a monthly meeting in Room 101 of the Casa del Prado in Balboa Park at 10 A.M. The program, "Arrangements in Variety", will be presented by Mrs. John Marx. \$1.50 donation.

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## The San Diego Floral Association

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## CALIFORNIA GARDEN

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### THE COVER

Cover sketch by Sally Bancroft is timely because of the reissuing and revision of the TORREY PINES STATE RESERVE, A Scientific Reserve of the Department of Parks and Recreation, by Carl L. Hubbs and Thomas W. Whitaker, The Torrey Pines Assn. La Jolla, Calif., 2nd ed. 1972, 96pp.

This booklet records the history and interprets the educational assets of the Torrey Pines State Reserve. It arrives at a crucial time when interest in this unique area is running high as time is running out to preserve it. The photographs and sketches by Margaret Eddy Fleming are exact and charming. A wonderful guide to take along on a tour of the park; stop by the reserve in North County.

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THELMA CARRINGTON

WHY NOT GROW sweet peas to gather by the basket-full and arm load? They give a subtle fragrance and beauty which will spread sunshine and warmth for many shut-in friends. With their tiny tendrils that twist around the graceful branches, they add an old fashioned grace and elegance to flower arrangements. Combined with other flowers they win prizes in flower shows—try using them in a basket or Victorian vase.

If you plant the seeds in September, sweet peas will bloom from mid-November until the end of June. First prepare a trench two or three feet deep and of desired length. Select a site in full sun and run the rows north and south in order to take advantage of the sun's warm rays before the days shorten and our rainy season begins. Select a new location each year, because sweet peas are heavy feeders that sap the nitrogen from the soil. Fill the trench with five or six inches of good garden soil mixed with compost and weed-free, rotted manure. This mixture will give needed nitrogen.

Seeds pre-soaked overnight in lukewarm water will germinate very quickly. (I prefer planting in a water sign, Pisces or Cancer.) Sow seeds thickly and allow extra seeds. The extra seedlings can be weeded out or transplanted. Always cover the seed bed with fine screened wire or the birds will feast on the tender sprouts—spread snail bait also. Remove the wire after the seedlings are four inches high. String a trellis of heavy string or wire attached to strong posts at each end of the row. One can purchase a trellis or plant at the base of a chain-linked fence. However, the fence will not be tall enough to support the twelve feet high plants of the taller varieties.

Seed racks usually contain three sweet pea varieties: (1) early flowering Spencers, (2) summer or late flowering Spencers and (3) Culbertsons. The latter is a new type that grows knee-high. These are ideal for gardeners who are short of space and are of particular interest to children.

After doing your gardening homework, the trench will be planted with a graceful flower that will provide masses of color to the garden and beauty for many gala occasions. The numerous dainty blossoms are one of the most delightful, easily grown and rewarding of flowers. After growing sweet peas for one season, they will prove to be a lifetime love affair. Their blossoms and delicate fragrance will be long remembered after all the florists' bouquets are gone.

Sweet peas linger in one's memory. Their tender tendrils tug at the heart strings and remind one that flowers, like friendship, have to be cultivated in order to grow, bloom and endure.

## NEOREGELIAS

THE GENUS NEOREGELIA is a member of the *Bromeliaceae* family and the *Bromelioideae* sub-family. The common name for this family of plants is bromel or bromeliad. Since the purpose of this article is to give information on the care of Neoregelias, I will start with the habitat of this genus.

First, bromeliads are native to the Americas. Mulford B. Foster of Florida, along with his wife, Racine, traveled extensively in South America collecting bromeliads. More important, he made herbarium specimens as well as collecting living material for identification. Through Dr. Lyman B. Smith of the Department of Botany, U. S. National Museum, the identification was made and included in his book, *THE BROMELIACEAE OF BRAZIL*.

Mulford B. Foster, in his *BLUEPRINT OF THE JUNGLE*, describes the Neoregelias as living on the first floor of the jungle. They like moisture and shade. Foster describes the structural character of the Brazilian jungle as blueprinted in the form of a great building with one, two, three or even four "stories" of growth. Seldom did he find a given plant growing in more than one of these areas. He goes on to say that Neoregelias, while growing on the ground, sometimes grew up the lower tree limbs. The floor of the jungle is so crowded with lush vegetation that it forces them to become epiphytes. The lower limbs are shaded by ferns, aroids, etc. He came to the conclusion that the bromeliads in this area need more constant conditions than those that grow higher in their "jungle apartment house." Another interesting discovery that he made was that the vegetative growth of these particular bromeliads is more luxuriant and showy, while the flowers and fruits of these plants are less spectacular than on those that grow higher up.

So what does all this tell us? Neoregelias should be grown in filtered light, under lath or tree. I have found Neoregelias very easy to grow. They are spectacular in bloom. The bloom often lasts eight months to a year. The leaf color and patterns on the leaves make them an attractive addition to the garden even when not in bloom. They make excellent houseplants as they hold water in the center cup of the plant.

From my own experience, I will give you only



general information on the care of Neoregelias in my area, La Mesa. There are exceptions to every rule, but the Neoregelias with shiny leaves usually need more shade than those with a duller, tougher leaf. In extremely hot weather, it is best to empty the water out of the cup and keep the area around the plant moist. This will increase humidity and hopefully keep the center from cooking and causing rot. Fertilize with any shade plant fertilizer, using half strength. Fertilize about twice a month. Do not pour the fertilizer into the center cup—it will burn the plant. I prefer to leaf feed by using a spraying device; I spray foliage and root area with a liquid fertilizing mixture.

Snails are a problem, because they enjoy the moist area between the leaves. KEEP snail bait around the plant—not in the cup.

To sum up the life cycle of a Neoregelia: Usually the immature Neoregelia's leaves grow in an upright position. As it matures, the leaves spread outward forming a rosette. A pincushion type of blossom appears in the cup, and a flush of red spreads around the bloom. The color becomes more intense and

covers about one-third of the leaf. The small flowers in the center usually open one or two at a time. The colored center often lasts almost a year. As the plant deteriorates, off-sets should have appeared around the base of the plant. Carefully, with a sharp knife, sever the "pup" from the mother plant. Pot the young plant in any media that allows quick drainage, such as: small bark, redwood compost, even small pebbles. Keep moist but not soggy. The cycle of growth starts all over again.

To the collector, the fascination lies in the wide range of size and growth habits of this genus. There is *Neo. ampullacea* which measures two inches in diameter and fives inches in height. It is stoloniferous and will cover a basket or grow along a branch of a tree. In contrast, there is *Neo. carcharodon*. It is one of the largest and most robust of the entire genus.

For further information on the *Bromeliaceae* family I recommend: Journal of the Bromeliad Society, P. O. Box 3279, Santa Monica, California 90403.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mary Birchell, President  
San Diego Bromeliad Society



# "PAT NIXON" and "FIRST LADY" HONOR MRS. RICHARD NIXON



Mrs. Richard Nixon accepts a bouquet of PAT NIXON roses from Mr. Maynard DuRei, President, and Mr. Ralph DeJohn, General Sales Manager of the Stuart Company.

IN A CEREMONY held in the Blue Room of the White House, Mrs. Richard Nixon accepted a bouquet of PAT NIXON roses, a new hybrid floribunda named in her honor by C. W. Stuart & Co., of Newark, N. Y.

The PAT NIXON rose is a dark velvety red, and has double flowers, three to three and one-half inches across, with sculptured petals. It has a subtle trace of fragrance. Its buds are attractive, well formed and have a brilliant red color. The foliage is dark green and glossy, covering the plant exceptionally well.

The rose is a cross between TAMANGO, a red floribunda, and an unnamed variety which was itself a cross between FIRE KING and BONZAI. The actual cross of the PAT NIXON rose took place in 1962 and has been some ten years in the making. It blooms freely on a fast growing bushy plant which achieves a height of approximately two and one-half to three feet at maturity, and is almost as broad as it is tall. Bushes have been planted on the White House grounds and at the Western White House in San Clemente, California.

The PAT NIXON rose has been grown and tested extensively by members of the All American Rose Society during the past two years.

In addition to its excellent appearance, the PAT NIXON rose has all the characteristics appealing to the amateur grower. It is ruggedly hardy, virtually disease free and resistant to black spot. It will grow easily in all areas south of Minneapolis, Minnesota. North of that zone, it will grow very satisfactorily provided it is given some winter protection.



Annabelle Stubbs, hybridizer of FIRST LADY, preens the plant before preparing the carton in which FIRST LADY traveled to her new home in the White House.

AT THE JULY MEETING of the National Fuchsia Society, Annabelle Stubbs of the Stubbs Fuchsia Nursery in Leucadia, California offered her latest introduction to the society for presentation to Mrs. Richard Nixon.

This now famous fuchsia, a 1973 introduction named FIRST LADY in honor of Mrs. Nixon, is a lovely, large, all pink double bloom.

Phones were kept busy while preparations were underway as to how to pack and ship FIRST LADY to her new home, the East Room Solarium at the White House in Washington, D. C.

It was an exciting Saturday, July 29, morning as interested parties gathered to watch veteran flower grower-shipper Lewis Thornton carefully pack the plant into her carton. There was considerable interest and lots of tense moments as they watched in fascination as the huge basket of foliage and flowers was so carefully packed into a carton that appeared too small for the large plant.

The plant's twelve inch redwood basket had a brass plaque inscribed, "FIRST LADY, 1973 introduction by Annabelle Stubbs, presented to Mrs. Richard Nixon by the National Fuchsia Society."

After FIRST LADY was received at the White House, a phone call to Martha Rader, N.F.S.'s Public Relations Director, assured all that the fuchsia had arrived in good shape.

Because yours is not the White House, you will not get FIRST LADY free this year. Like the rest of us, you will have to wait until next year, and pay for it.



# THE BOOK SHELF

Reviewed by THERESA KARAS YIANILOS  
Author of THE COMPLETE GREEK COOKBOOK,  
Funk & Wagnals, 1971.

**COMMON MARSH: UNDER-WATER AND FLOATING LEAVED PLANTS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA**, by Neil Hotchkiss, Dover Publications, N.Y. 1972, 124 pp. (\$3.00).

Two valuable publications on field identification are published in one volume by Dover. The one describes the emergent and semi-emergent plants most likely to be found in inland and coastal marsh. The second describes all of the wild flowering plants, ferns, liverworts and Characeae in which the foliage is habitually under water or floating. Prepared for the Department of Interior and packed with illustrations (295 in all), they contain up-to-date guides for accurate and quick identification. A timely book for people interested in the marsh. It will increase the pleasure of a walk through those marshlands closest to us here in San Diego County.

**AN ATLAS OF PLANT STRUCTURE**, Vol. I, by W.H. Freeman and Patricia H. Miles, Heinemann Educational Books, London;

**AN ATLAS OF INVERTEBRATE STRUCTURE**, by W.H. Freeman and Brian Bracegirdle.

These sturdy clothbound books are especially designed to be used in the laboratory and to help the student interpret his own specimen material. Both books follow the same general layout with photomicrographs of each specimen faced by interpretive

line drawings which retain the detail the observer will see on his slides. There is a total of 147 plates covering both flowering and non-flowering plants and showing the structure of root stem and leaf, cell division, and the development of anther and ovule.

**THE COMPLETE ROSARIAN**, by Norman Young, St. Martin's Press, N.Y. 1972, 286 pp., Glossary, Index (\$12.50).

Here is a book intended primarily for those who already grow roses, who know roses or who love roses. The content (and sub-title) encompasses the development, cultivation and reproduction of roses written by a Rosarian who was a contributor to the literature on roses in Britain and abroad. Included in the chapters under the category of Historical, are *Roses of Antiquity* with complete background information on The Age of Species and Hybrids. Part Two is descriptive and deals with scent, colour, growth and pruning, food and drink and soil. Part Three covers the reproductive which includes vegetative propagation, propagation from seed, practical hybridizing, pests and diseases.

**STURTEVANT'S EDIBLE PLANTS OF THE WORLD**, ed. by U.P. Hedrick, Dover Publications, N.Y., 1972, 686 pp., (\$5.00).

I picked up this book to review and found it so fascinating that I stayed up half the night discovering all sorts

of delightful and interesting facts about edible plants. Discussed here are favorite foods: onions, breadfruit, oats peppers, melons, bananas, and corn, the potato and the eggplant and rare foods as well as edible plants of the Americas and the North American Indians. Condiments, staples, beverage plants, tobaccos, chewing plants, narcotics and important foods of other lands and times are covered in this erudite and informative work. It certainly is a magnificent book for the gardener cook and a complete guide to the literature on edible plants as well as to plants used for food.

**STARFISHES, SERPENT, STARS, SEA URCHINS AND SEA CUCUMBERS OF THE NORTHEAST** by Roswell Coe, Dover Publications, N.Y., 1972, 152 pp. (\$2.50).

You're probably wondering why this book should be reviewed in a gardening magazine. It seemed appropriate to me since we in San Diego live at the edge of the sea. Our tidepools are gardens with these sea creatures. If you're a traveler you may have seen the harvest of sea urchins and eaten them in Europe. Anyone with an elementary knowledge of biology will find this thorough treatment of all the Echinoderms clear and understandable. Many species are documented by photographic plates of representative specimens. This book makes an excellent addition to anyone's library of natural science.

# FROM BEGGAR'S BLANKET

NELDA H. BRANDENBURGER  
DEWITT BISHOP, photos

VERBASCUM THAPSUS sounds like a rare hybrid or hard-to-get exotic, but don't let the name fool you. It is only the Latin for a common roadside weed, mullein, a plant distributed widely throughout the United States, and one that is rapidly becoming a much sought-after flower arranging material. If you have never noticed this weed, sometimes called Beggar's Blanket or Flannel Plant, you may be in for some surprises.

According to legend, mullein originated near the ancient coastal village of Thapsus in the Mediterranean. During its long history and before, it was used for a variety of purposes. Early Romans dipped dry stems in tallow and burned them for funeral torches. Medieval witches were said to have used the plant in their sorcery while American Indians dried and smoked the soft, flannel-like leaves for lung disorders. They also brewed the seeds into a tea for relieving colds and calming nerves. The plant is still used for medicine by the Hopi Indians. Recently cosmetic companies have chemically duplicated some of its ingredients for skin softening creams.

Flower arrangers, however, use mullein as design material and comb the countryside looking for the strange plant. You will find it growing in empty lots and old farmyards, on grassy tracks and other places where the soil is left uncultivated. Look for slender spikes, some as tall as eight feet rising from velvety rosettes of gray-green leaves. In the early summer these spikes which have given the plant the additional name, Candlewick, are covered with sulphur-colored flowers which turn to rough textured seed pods in the fall. Sometimes due to the effect of insect damage, disease or chemical sprays, mullein stalks fasciate or contort into fanciful shapes resembling everything from prehistoric monsters to garden scarecrows. George Walker of Dayton, Ohio, found a plant along the highway that looked like a Kentucky long-rifle, and Herb Wood of Sacramento, California, found one that rivaled a Chinese New Year's dragon. You find such oddities wherever regular mullein grows. As a flower arranger, however, you will enjoy the plant mainly for the expressive possibilities of its textured lines and free-form shapes.

After you find your mullein be sure to groom it before placing it in your arrangement. Here's how to proceed:

Nelda H. Brandenburg, professional flower arranger, nationally accredited flower show judge and instructor, lecturer and author of INTERPRETIVE FLOWER ARRANGEMENT, Hearthsides Press.



# TO ARTISTIC DESIGN

FAR LEFT: Sinister heads of fasciated mullein hover over a lovely LADY CLARE camellia.  
 LOWER LEFT: Adorned with hydrangea and fan palm, mullein resembles a fanciful cartoon character.  
 UPPER RIGHT: Heavily seeded mullein stalks create a decorative design with graceful feathers, fruit and flowers.  
 LOWER RIGHT: Mullein circles repeat a container design. (Reprinted from INTERPRETIVE FLOWER ARRANGEMENT by permission of Hearthside Press, publisher)



1. Bend fresh green spikes into graceful curves and tie them with light wire until they dry.
2. Stand stems in a shallow box and let them take their own interesting curves.
3. For straight lines hang the spikes upside down in a well ventilated place such as an attic or garage.
4. Remove some or all of the seeds with a wire brush to give stems a glossy striated appearance.
5. Protect your nose and mouth from the irritating fuzz by wearing a simple muslin mask. One arranger turns on a vacuum cleaner near the brushing operation.
6. To paint mullein first coat it with gesso or Spackle mixed to the consistency of light cream by adding water. This keeps paint from being absorbed into the heavy texture. After coating dries, spray with floral paint (available in hobby shops). Omit gesso or Spackle if you use stain.

In your arrangement anchor the heavy mullein securely by using a needlepoint holder or by nailing it to self-supporting pieces of driftwood. Wiring one piece of mullein to another is an easy way to keep it in place. If your arrangement is to be made of only dried material, select a tall container and use tightly wedged styrofoam for support.

Here are some dry plants that combine well with mullein: lotus pods, cockscomb, yarrow, artichokes, cardoon, hydrangea, and glycerine treated leaves of magnolia, loquat and oak. (To treat with glycerine insert stems in mixture of one part glycerine to two parts hot water.) Fresh flowers provide dramatic contrast. Try camellias, calla lilies, clematis, roses and chrysanthemums.

If you have trouble finding mullein in the country, you might try growing it in your own garden. All you need is space and good drainage. In my garden mullein has appeared in such unlikely places as the cracks in the driveway cement and the mortar of a low brick wall. You must wait two years for it to bloom, because mullein is a biennial which establishes only roots and basal leaves the first year. Seeds are available from some native plant nurseries.

No matter whether you grow mullein yourself or gather it in the wilds you will enjoy this rugged plant. Try some *Verbascum thapsus* for an unusual flower arrangement, and one that will interest viewers. It's cheaper than long stemmed roses and guaranteed to be a conversation piece.





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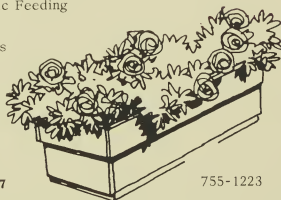
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# CHEESEWEED

HELEN WITHAM



LOWER LEFT: fruits of Cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*).  
ABOVE RIGHT: larger wedges of cheese are from the Tree Mallow (*Lavatera assurgentiflora*).

ANNE GALLOWAY, photo

A GRANDSON ONCE ASKED ME: "Did you live in the horse and buggy days?"

Well, not exactly, but I do remember when cheese arrived at the little country store where my family traded, in the form of a large wheel. This stood on the wooden counter under a drape of netting, and the grocer was always carefully watched as he tried to slice off a wedge of exactly one half pound, or one pound, or whatever was ordered. The general opinion was that he "always cut it larger", thereby selling a few pennies' worth more than the buyer wanted to buy.

Anyone who remembers this kind of cheese merchandising, or anyone who looks at the photo-

graph, will see how the fruits of the malva came to be known as cheeses, and the plant itself to be called Cheeseweed. As children we sometimes ate, or at least occasionally sampled, the cheeses. Now, I wonder why. It must be that there is an age when anything nibble-able gets nibbled, and the tradition is passed along in the folk culture of nibblers. On behalf of CALIFORNIA GARDEN, I sampled some the other day. Uck!

"Come to think of it, I do recall that groceries were delivered from that store in a horse-drawn wagon, so that probably does make me a holdover from the horse and buggy days, grandson."

\* \* \* \* \*

# A HYMN OF PRAISE

JO GRAY

BUT FOR HERBS AND GERANIUMS I shouldn't have had a summer. All the flowers that love the heat—zinnias, marigolds, Shasta daisies—failed me. Without my glasses I misread the marigold seed packet and planted dwarf French instead of giant African, and as though they knew they weren't really wanted, they came up sparsely and unwillingly and didn't stay long. The zinnias didn't even bother to germinate and when I bought pony packs, something promptly ate them. Even the Shasta daisies didn't get off the ground—literally; the many clumps I had planted early to be sure of having masses of their clean fresh faces all summer, just sat. Finally one plant grudgingly put forth two three inch stems topped by a white frilled yellow button. I wonder if I unwittingly bought dwarfs? Everything is so mini minded that it seems hard to find plants that are allowed to grow in their normal fashion.

Next to this reluctant daisy stood a two and a half foot Rue covered with sulphur yellow flowers, and beyond, against the fence a great apricot scented geranium was lavish with rosy bloom. This geranium is inclined to sprawl, and I save small branches from pruned trees or shrubs which have a number of good crotches, and use them as props. This saves staking and tying—and also looks much nicer in a flower bed.

If I were a neat gardener, I should have pulled out the Savory seedling I saw in the border's edge in March, and in July should have been denied the ruching of white along the path. In the small Lavender plot, Dittany of Crete spread a wall to wall rose colored carpet so dense that the round wooly gray leaves were almost hidden. The individual blossoms remind me of rosy honey bees, though the books say that they look like hop flowers, giving rise to the secondary name, Hop Marjoram.

A traveler from Crete tells us that for a long time Dittany has been the "only tea" for Cretans. They

say it is healthy and promotes well-being, besides tasting good; it is aromatic and the people of Crete say it "has a gentle taste and is soft going down." It is cultivated for commercial trade, but the Cretans say that the cultivated variety is inferior, and that the best Dittany grows only on the steep sides of their mountains. Often in May when it blooms there (for me it blooms in July and August) gatherers are lowered over the mountain side by ropes to pick it. Small stands on streets as far away as Athens sell this precious herb.

And the geraniums! I sometimes wonder why I try to have anything but geraniums and herbs. We must have irises and bulbs to usher in the spring, but for the hot part of the year when gardening in the sun is a misery, herbs and geraniums prove their worth. If one never dried a rose-geranium leaf or snipped a bit of Thyme for a stew, they are worth while for their beauty and their faithfulness to your needs. If company comes and you cannot get out to water for days, they wait patiently until you can, and never wilt or cease to bloom. If you want flowers for your dining table, branches of rosy-carmin *Clorinda* geranium and long flowering stems of pineapple mint are not only colorful but also scent the room.

Since early spring exotic looking pelargoniums have been blooming in a border which gets sun all day long. Dark-red *Rogue*, pale shell-colored *Dawn* and gaudy *Aztec* all bloom among a vague mixture of *Thymes*, *Savory* and *Oregano*, punctuating the sober prose of the herbs. Sober, until July, *Oregano* erupts into fountains and plumes of white blossoms, then there is such a commerce of bees that it is as though the plants were humming to themselves.

Now I am looking with satisfaction at the labeled rows of geranium slips in my sand boxes; *Skies of Italy*, *Mrs. Cox*, *Mountains of Snow* and silky leafed *Apple* and *Nutmeg*. Next summer there will be enough charming rosebud *Sibyl Holmes* to make



ABOVE: Mrs. Gray's "sandbox"  
RIGHT: Dark Opal Basil, good for vinegar



many hanging baskets, and there will be Applause enough for everyone!

Suddenly everything wants to go to seed. The Basils which were so slow to get started are rushing to extinguish themselves unless they are kept picked. It is hard to keep ahead of the blossoming of the Marjoram, Lemon Verbena and Oregano too, but they must be cut for drying before they bloom, just as the bud is on the edge, on a cool dim morning.

O be grateful for all loveliness

And give it thanks and praise!

## JAPANESE IRISES

IF YOU haven't seen a Japanese iris you wouldn't believe it! These spectacular, exotic blooms are a show stopper. While we call them Japanese, they really are natives of China. They are the flat tops, gigantic in size, some with ruffled and curled petals, others starched and gayly prim. In color they vary from white to pink to blue to purple, and are often striped with a dazzling effect. Some single, some double or even peony flowered, they are always graceful and breath taking.

In Japan these lovely irises have been cultivated for over 500 years. While some Japanese irises still are imported, we now have American strains developed by U.S. hybridizers. In general, the more contemporary varieties have greater substance, more distinctive color, and better branching.

Because Japanese irises are moisture lovers, they thrive best in seaboard states. In Japan they are often grown in former rice paddies that can be flooded during the growing season. In addition to moisture, the other prime requirement of these irises is an acidic soil condition. To obtain that condition in southern California, the addition of soil sulphur to the planting area, and the use of acid fertilizer ( such as camellia fertilizer ) is necessary and recommended.

The article by VAN WELBORN. The illustration by ALAN DENNEY. With permission from the Southern California Iris Society's IRIS NOTES.





# POPULAR FOLIAGE PLANTS



**STRIPED DRACAENA**  
(*Dracaena Deremensis* Warnecke)  
Light: diffuse / Temp: room / Mix: damp



**DRACAENA MARGINATA**  
Light: diffuse / Temp: room / Mix: damp



**DWARF JEWEL-LEAF PALM**  
(*Neanthe Bella*)  
Light: semi-dark / Temp: room / Mix: damp



**GRAPE IVY**  
(*Vitis Rhombifolia*)  
Light: diffuse / Temp: room / Mix: damp



**DISH GARDENS**  
Light: diffuse / Temp: room / Mix: moist



**FIDDLE-LEAF FIG PLANT**  
(*Ficus Pandurata*)  
Light: diffuse / Temp: room / Mix: damp

HERE ARE A few tips on interior plant culture which will help you discover and enjoy the wonders of nature through indoor plants at their best.

A position near a north window furnishes just the right amount of diffused or natural light for plants native to shaded jungles, as are most house plants. Very few foliage plants can tolerate direct sun, especially when the sunlight is intensified through clear glass.

Variegated foliage plants always like more light than do solid green varieties. It is a common error to move foliage plants for an occasional outing in the garden. The shock of moving back and forth between the two extremes is more likely to give an adverse effect.

A safe rule of thumb is to use a plant food tablet or diluted liquid fertilizer once a month. If a plant is undernourished, twice-monthly feedings are recommended until the plant is flourishing again.

House dust is another foreign factor that indoor plants must contend with. Leaves covered with dust can not carry on transpiration in the normal manner. Keep them free of dust by cleaning the leaves, top and bottom, with a damp cloth or sponge once or twice a month.

Make the leaves shine with a lustrous solution (avoid lacquer type leaf polishes which will clog the pores of the leaves) especially made for house plants. To avoid burning the foliage, be certain to water the plants several hours before you apply any preparation. Don't use oil of any kind on the leaves. Some prefer to use milk at room temperature for their cleaning solution. It is not harmful to the plants and can present a "store bought" shine.

Growing plants in your home is the natural beginning for the beautification of America. If you follow a few simple directions, it is easy to be successful in creating for your home a warmth and graciousness that only living plants can provide.



# PROPELLER PLANT, *Crassula falcata*

KATIE McREYNOLDS

WHEREVER YOU MAY LIVE—mobile home, town house, apartment, or country place—this is a plant for all men, all places and all seasons. A proven house plant, in our area it is an eye-catcher in window box or patio pot and a stunning addition to any border or garden.

This shapely succulent branches freely from its base and forms dense clumps of thick, fleshy stems with obliquely sickle-shaped gray-green leaves that clasp the stem edgewise in nearly horizontal, crowded, parallel, shingle-like rows from which it derives its names of Propeller Plant, Aeroplane Plant and Aeroplane Propellers.

The intense red-orange compact heads burst into a bright display of showy, terminal clusters in August and September and give rise to the common name, Scarlet Paint Brush. The flowers are long-lasting and stay vivid for lengthy periods of time. The sturdy pink flower stalks cut well and are dramatic in flower arrangements or alone in accent vases.

This handsome, very floriferous succulent sub-shrub is native to the southeast Cape Province of South Africa. Botanically known as *Crassula* (Křās-ŭ-lá) *falcata* (fal-ka-ta), the species is so called because of its scythe-shaped (*fālcāte*) leaves. It is from the large genus of succulent herbs, distinguished by four-parted flowers with as many stamens as petals, whose name is derived from the Latin *crassa* meaning “thick”, in the family Crassulaceae, order Rosales.

A delight for non-green-thumbers, this remarkably hardy herb is almost immune to disease or pests. Blighting of leaves indicates unhappy growing conditions, such as bad light, stale air, excess watering, or frost damage. The soil mix is not critical; loam, clay, or good garden soil with decayed manure and up to 1/3 humus or peat moss and 1/3 coarse sand added has proven satisfactory. Some growers recommend loam and sand in equal parts. It is best to drench thoroughly when watering and let soil become moderately dry between waterings. Full sun is acceptable, as is bright, filtered, or diffused light, for optimum growth and florescence.

Propagation is mere child's play from either seed or leaf and stem cuttings. If blossoms are allowed to go to seed and laid on any soil that gets some moisture, dozens of seedlings will simply appear. No sterile sand, formal care or planting skill is needed. Leaves or stems broken off the parent plant by accident and left lying on the ground will root or send up a plantlet, more frequently than not. For purists, however, the procedure is equally simple. Make a cut at the base of leaf or stem, allow to callus by being exposed to the air for several hours, and insert into sand, moistening

SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER



Symmetry of form and subtlety of hue provide arresting plant sculpture for year round enjoyment indoors or out (for spiders, too).

Lush clusters of radiant, scarlet 5-petaled flowerets, made more lively by bright yellow stamens, remain brilliant for weeks.

BILL GUNTHER, photos



when thoroughly dry. After roots form, after two or three weeks, a mild fertilizer solution will encourage root growth to reach the transplant stage more quickly.

In cultivation, this plant grows from one to three feet in height with leaves three to four inches long. In its native habitat, it has been known to reach eight feet and has been seen—rarely—with white flowers. Hybridized with *Rochea coccinea* (= *Crassula clavifolia*) an intermediate between the two parents, x *Kalorochea langleyensis*, was produced. Also, an attractive Hummel hybrid, *falcata* x *deceptrix*, has been described as resembling *C. cornuta* with short, keel-shaped, velvety, grayish-green leaves. Does any reader know where these hybrids can be found?

# HALF PAST A CENTURY

NIBBY KLINEFELTER

## The Lathhouse

"DID YOU PAY ANY ATTENTION to the last article under this head?", the peppery A. D. Robinson asked in the June 1922 issue of CALIFORNIA GARDEN. He continued to the point.

"I want to know because I take time to tell you about the lathhouse which I ought to spend working in it. Don't forget NOT to monkey around the roots of begonias; put your renewing material on the top and also keep in mind that a wet surface may hide a dry below."

Of the annual meeting held in Mr. Robinson's lathhouse in July of 1922, Eloise Roorbach wrote: "Mr. Robinson has created in remarkable degree the lush warm moist atmosphere of a forest. About 10,000 plants and a thick ground cover of moss (*Nertera depressa*) are on view. Over 200 varieties of begonias were in full bloom, many of which he created. He has done the patient and expensive experimenting necessary to determine the scope, power and limitation of this picturesque form of house and has given the public the benefit of his experiments.

"One of the events of the year is the meeting held in his lathhouse. It is something to the credit of the 300 people who walked along the moss covered paths that not a stalk was broken or a bloom injured."

In the same issue the man with the lathhouse complained pungently in print, "I don't want to be a grouch but don't you think I might have a little time in this lathhouse while it is at its best with my particular friends? I had an idea I was being pretty generous when I set aside two days a week for the public to wander through and call begonias 'cinerarias' and fuchsias' and ask how they got that way, but I can't control them at all. They can't or won't read my signs.

"In the spring in spite of all my efforts and notices





## ROSECROFT TODAY

BETTY MACKINTOSH, photos



in the papers that I had not a damned thing worth looking at, they came and brought strangers whom they told how I was letting the place run down. Now the thing is pretty good again. I say, come on Wednesday and Sunday between ten and four and confine your inspection to the lathhouse. I don't want you wandering all over the ten acres. Do they do it? Not on your tintype! They come any old day any old time and say they have a friend, from England mostly, as they know that is likely to catch me and having passed my defense wander all over, look in my windows and drive me upstairs cussing helplessly..... No human could answer the questions the lathhouse hears and keep both sane and polite, but hiding does not help for I am called on the phone the next day with additional questions and am driven to keep murmuring 'Thank you' into the receiver but I don't know what I mean and I am sure no one else does.

"The hard part of all this is that I kind of have a feeling most of these folks think they are paying me compliments, and that there is no greater compliment than to be properly and thoroughly inquisitive."

He ended his remarks rather plaintively, although stating quite definitely, "I do want every one truly interested in lathhouses and begonias to feel perfectly free to see my collection on the days appointed."

(The stream-of-consciousness punctuation has been little altered. Mr. R. wrote from the top of his head and put his heart rather than commas in his writings.)

# TOMATO TIME

ROSALIE GARCIA

THE STAPLE OF THE SALAD BOWL and the base of luscious sauces are our beloved tomatoes. They are with us daily, but really come into their own in southern California during the fall. Roadside stands sell them for \$1 a lug; even the supermarkets deign to offer them for ten cents a pound. The home garden has an abundance for canning and juicing. Great platters of sliced ones with onions and cucumbers grace any meal. Try them for breakfast with the bacon and eggs.

The tomato is a 20th century vegetable which doubles in use every ten years. The Spaniards found this tender perennial on the slopes of western South America in the 16th century and introduced it to Europe as an ornamental. The clusters of red and yellow fruits, the dainty, lacy foliage were an addition to the flower garden. Some kind of legend grew that dubbed them "Love Apples" or "Golden Apples." Their kin to the deadly nightshade family kept anyone from eating them. Thomas Jefferson had some in his garden, but he did not eat them. Sometime around 1834 an American nurseryman was selling seeds and advising people to plant and eat them. Gradually adventurous souls tried them and were attracted to the sweet-sour flavor. The editor of an English garden magazine, William Robinson, carried on a dogged campaign promoting the tomato as a fine vegetable that the English should grow. (The Floral Library has bound volumes of this magazine from 1870–1900.) They were obstinate, and he had little success. Not so the Italians and French. They took to the tomato with gusto, improved it, grew it in profusion and evolved the ways we know for its use. All of the Mediterranean peoples now are practically addicted to them.

The canning industry which developed in the late 19th century found the tomato a natural for canning. Soon grocery stores all over the United States stocked their shelves with cans gaily decorated with a large red tomato. On Saturday afternoons the country people came to the store and looked forward to treating themselves to a can of tomatoes and a box of salt crackers which they ate on the porch of the store. They also took a few cans home with them. The cool, refreshing juice and soft succulent flesh went down smoothly and was satisfying. The next step was home canning in glass jars so that the family had them ready any season for casseroles, stews, or just plain eating—like fruit.

Before tomato diseases and pests became so preva-

lent, there were better varieties grown than we can now produce. When farms were far apart, the garden pests did not travel so fast as they do now when our gardens are next door to each other. There is no vegetable so disease or pest prone as the tomato. Viruses, fungi, wilts, worms and bugs gravitate toward them to blight, wither, or spoil both vine and fruit. Changes of temperature and proper use of water both affect the growth, for this tropical plant produces best in a seventy degree temperature. Lately a "canker" (white spots under the skin) has appeared in gardens and even in commercial crops to plague and poison the fruits.

Because of all the ills the tomato is heir to, the commercial growers have had to settle on a variety they call the Improved Pearson, which is what we usually find in the markets. It has a tough rind, a big seed mass, often hollow around the seeds and almost no juice unless it is mushy ripe. This one ships well. It can be harvested just as the rind turns whitish or transparent and put in a dark place to turn red. Often it is still green inside. It is on the sour side, lacking that balance of sweet-sour savor which is in the ideal tomato. It even has a touch of that green or raw taste of its cousin the potato. Hybridizers have even produced a very efficient vegetable which grows potatoes on the root and tomatoes on the plant. It is a pomato. Ideally this is the most efficient use of soil, but remember: in order to get the potato one must forego the tomato, so it is really not so efficient.

Except for the few weeks in the fall, tomatoes are always expensive, but they are available any time of the year. People buy them even when they are of poor quality, because a taste for that refreshing sweet-sour quality is never sated once acquired.

Tomatoes have little food value as they are over ninety-five percent water, but the minerals and vitamins—especially vitamin C—are beneficial. A glass of juice is often a start of any meal and is appetite stimulating, even without the vodka that makes it a Bloody Mary.

In the last three years we have been seeing handsome red, uniform tomatoes with the stem end attached marked "hydroponics." They are expensive, more bland in flavor but solid with few seeds. They are fine for slicing and quartering. They are grown mostly in desert areas inside Quonset huts roofed with plastic panels. Airconditioning systems keep temperatures stable. Troughs filled with gravel, through which a constant flow of chemically treated water circulates, is the medium in which the plants grow



and produce. There is no need for using poison pesticides, because pests seldom can get in. The seeds are planted right in the medium and grow much faster than outside for they have a twenty-four hour day in which to grow. The plants are allowed to get ten feet high and produce heavily for six months. They would produce longer, but they are removed and others set in to keep up production. The fruits are ripened on the vine, packed and sent quickly to market.

Locally, we have a commercial grower near Valley Center and a much larger one at Yucca Valley, in our high desert. The Phoenix, Arizona, area has acres of these huts in production. They are able to produce twelve months of the year with no seasonal variation and certainly will take a greater part of the commercial market. There are troughs available in sizes for home use from four to eight feet. They do not even need a sunny window, but a room in which an even temperature can be kept is necessary. They use artificial lights instead of sunlight. The San Diego Floral Association has one in its room in the Casa del Prado where flowers and herbs are growing successfully. There is no reason why it could not have three or four tomato plants and furnish fruits all year. A special variety has been hybridized just for hydroponic growing, and the seeds are obtainable.

In many parts of San Diego County, one can grow some variety of tomato all year outside in specially selected spots. Usually the south side of a wall or the house or a protected corner is the best choice. The tomato in the wild state is a perennial and can still be with care. The cherry is our best choice. With care, it will last up to four or five years and easily lasts for two. We can usually grow any tomato as an annual by planting seeds in boxes in January and setting them out from March until June. The time depends on how warm it is, for tomatoes do not grow well except in full sun and in a temperature of at least seventy.

Our seed racks give us great choice, and nursery counters are having more varieties. Beware of the pony of spindly plants with yellowed leaves. They will seldom "come out." Good garden soil of sand, loam and compost is all one needs. They need little fertilizer if they have good soil. Vines will attain fifteen feet with most of the fruit around the lower sections, but later they will produce higher up on the vine. Commercial growers stake them to about four feet because of the ease of picking. The hydroponic growers allow the vines to get to six feet, allowing enough foliage to remain to shade the fruits. A sun-burned tomato is not fit to eat.

As for variety, we can have little or big, red, yellow or white, but red is the popular color. Burpee's Big Boy and Early Hybrid are popular and least susceptible to the perils of disease and pests. The pinks, Globe,

Oxheart and Ponderosa, are more delicate, less heavy bearers and more susceptible to all the hazards of tomato growing. Any grower will feel a great sense of accomplishment if he can come up with some of these. The large orange or yellow Jubilee or Sun Ray are a little easier to grow. These golden fruits, that are firm and almost seedless with tender skins, are the beloved of those who have a low tolerance for acids. The white tomato is similar to the yellows and is even more bland and tender. However, it sort of repels the red tomato buffs. The small ones range in size from that of a medium sized grape to large cherries. The smallest we can buy seed for is Tiny Tim which is near the original wild tomato, yet refined. It is fine for hanging baskets and a show stopper with its clusters of red fruits. They are better than our common cherry, because they are sweet with delicate skins. Our common and hardy red cherry is tough, tart but so juicy that eating it becomes a technique. Often found on the cocktail table or the salad platter, it should be popped into the mouth whole and chomped down on with closed lips, lest a shower explodes across the table. A small round tomato, larger than the cherry but not too big to eat in one bite, is the Basket Pak. It is juicier and more delicate but not so hardy and prolific as the cherry.

The San Marzano or Italian tomato, which is the source of tomato paste, is often canned whole, pickled green or sliced in salads. Even the canned ones can go into a salad, because they are firm and succulent. It is almost pest free, matures quickly, makes a small vine and bears heavily. It is seldom over two inches and is solid and elongated instead of round like most tomatoes.

Small yellows in my estimation are less flavorful and tougher than the reds, but the yellow pear which is very decorative, makes a pretty and tasty preserve. The yellow plum is sort of oval or egg-like in shape and helps make an attractive bowl when mixed with the small red ones.

Since tomatoes are such a favorite, they have been hybridized into sizes and growing habits so that enough varieties exist that no matter what kind of living space one has, it is possible to have a tomato plant. One specially designed with a small root system to be grown in pots is Burpee's Pixie. It has heavy, dark green foliage that is ornamental, attains no more than eighteen inches on a sturdy main stem that holds the plant upright. Planted in borders or in pots around the patio, we are back to the ornamental "Love Apple" that is now edible. Since tomatoes are subtropicals that develop in fifty to eighty days in warm and humid temperatures, there are enough varieties and ways of growing them so that one can have them all year. Tomato time is all the time!

\* \* \* \* \*

# APARTMENT GARDENING

CRAIG SILGJORD

A-PART'MENT (a-part 'ment), n.a. suite or set of rooms; esp., a number of rooms with necessary corridors etc., in a house or hotel, occupied as a dwelling; often a pretentious flat.

Webster's definition fits many a vision of what an apartment might well be. There are, however, a great number of apartment complexes which, not unlike the one featured in this article, merit a revision of Webster's definition. These non-conforming apartment complexes are examples of the direction housing for the future must take; it is

this page. Mine is a somewhat biased opinion, but nonetheless, I feel that the Cimarron Apartments located in San Diego happen to be among the best planned garden apartments in southern California. The main entrance creates a feeling of spaciousness, warmth and hominess. The center court, which serves as a common entry to all the apartments, also provides a barrier against noise from the street traffic.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the complex is the vine covered railings which line the balconies of

grass and accented with small boulders. When lighted at night from their bases, the trees create a wonderfully interesting sight for each apartment dweller to gaze upon from the living room windows.

Planted under several of the stair casings on the lower and middle levels are large leafy philodendrons. When lighted at night they create eerie shadows that baffle the mind. Precisely pruned abelia shrubs, also lighted at night, provide focal points for several otherwise uninteresting areas of the garden court.



This close-up portion of the garden courtyard clearly shows that the garden is meticulously maintained. The boulders and brick are permanent fixtures which are accented with Korean grass, philodendrons, lobelias and pansies.

the only economically feasible solution to our growing housing crisis.

In solving one problem however, another is created. The new problem is trying to create a "home-like" atmosphere for those people who live together under a common roof. The pictures on this page prove beyond a doubt that such a problem does have a solution. The solution lies in creating a pleasing garden court for each apartment complex to be centered around.

I personally have had the pleasure of living in the complex pictured on

all three levels. The vines have grown the full length of the balconies, twisting themselves steadily upward. Actually all this vegetation is derived from only two trumpet vines each rooted under the first floor stair casings on opposite sides of the garden. According to the manager of the complex, the vines have taken over eight years to reach their current growth.

A number of tall trees such as the Queensland umbrella and dracena palms are planted in the lower level areas in beds covered with Korean

The layout of the garden is not so short sighted as to neglect the flowering plants which, along with their visual beauty, also provide sumptuous odors for the "smeller." Immediately upon entering the garden, as if planned by an act of Mother Nature herself, night blooming jasmine greets each person with a faint whiff of heaven. Bedding plants include pansies, begonias, Shasta daisies, dwarf periwinkles, carnations, gerbers, and seedling dahlias. These are scattered abundantly throughout lower and middle terraces.

The creator-designer of this court obviously had in mind a specific objective; that of blending together foliage plants, shrubs and trees for accent and combinations of flowering plants which seem to perfectly alternate during the seasons giving the impression of a garden with a truly unending show of blossoms.

CALIFORNIA GARDEN

## MINI SHORTS

Though opinion on the subject varies, hobbyists generally agree that Bearded Iris should be lifted and divided immediately after bloom. Use a sharp knife to divide the rhizomes. The older, woody sections should be discarded. Plant robust divisions which have a good fan of leaves. Leaves can be trimmed back to six inches for ease of handling.

Some heat-loving plants seem better for later planting, rather than being set out early. May planted tomatoes for instance, often get there faster than those planted in early spring. This is especially true in cooler coastal climates and areas where weather is slow to warm up. Zinnias are in the same category; in certain climes, transplants of these free flowering annuals are not always available before mid-to-late May for this reason.

Pinching is the gardener's way of guiding growth in such summer and fall favorites as fuchsias, chrysanthemums, carnations and dahlias. A properly timed pinch will eliminate some need for heavier pruning on many other shrubs at a later date. Check the progress of hanging basket fuchsias at any of your nearby nurseries. Their shrubbiness and flowering potential can be attributed directly to pinching.



**Upper Left:** Dracena palms and split leafed philodendrons constitute emphatic accent material to break what otherwise would be rigid architectural lines.

**Upper Right:** Lamp, plants, staircases and their shadows join forces to make the courtyard an appealing pattern rather than a harsh exposure of building facades.

**Lower Left:** The wrought iron handrails on the balconies and staircases serve a double duty function by providing beautiful support for the high climbing trumpet vine. This vine is an excellent plant selection for this area. It is green the year round and its seasonal flowers provide an extra bonus of beauty.

**Lower Right:** This dwarf periwinkle, BRIGHT EYES, has attractive dark glossy—green foliage and contrasting white and pink windmill-like blossoms. It is pest free and performs well throughout this area.





## Winter Vegetables

IT IS ONE of the pleasures of gardening in California that vegetables can be harvested in both summer and winter months—not to mention fall and spring. When eastern gardens are covered with snow, home gardeners in the Golden State can be harvesting delicious treats for the dinner table.

To reap a winter harvest, Californians must sow seed and/or set out transplants in September. Yet, some popular vegetables are not available for winter plucking. Summer favorites such as corn, beans and squash are not going to grow during the winter even in California—unless you garden in the lower Imperial Valley, that is. Some vegetables that will thrive in the cooler growing season ahead are peas, carrots, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, spinach, beets, radishes, turnips, endive and Brussels sprouts.

Some of these will be available now, or in the coming weeks, already started in nursery flats. The small transplants are easily set out into the home vegetable garden. Those which are not available in flats can be sown now for winter harvest. These seeds will germinate quickly since the soil is warm, and they will be ready for harvest before you know it.

This is a good time of the year to introduce the youngsters of the family to the fun of vegetable gardening—because of the rapid germination of seeds. Radishes, for instance, come on so quickly that successive sowings can be made at three week intervals. Children will get great satisfaction from the dividends which quickly accrue.

There are two important considerations in planting winter vegetable crops. Since the vegetable will be growing in the rainy season, good drainage is necessary. Raised beds provide one answer, but a well balanced organic planting mixture will both condition the soil and enhance drainage. Secondly, all vegetables like sun—no matter what season they are planted. Give them a spot which receives a maximum of sunshine during the winter months ahead.

## FALL—BEST PLANTING SEASON

IT DOES NOT MATTER who started it; or, when it began. It has developed over the past years and will continue to grow. This trend of man to return to nature is more than a fad or the “in thing” to do. Man is becoming aware that green plants are essential to his environment. While he may not plant trees, shrubs and flowers as insurance for cleaner air, or to reduce smog, man does rely on these things to reduce sound and noise, to beautify neighborhoods and communities and for beauty in his micro-environment, his home garden.

There is a definite affinity between man and plants. It is expressed in myriad contemporary ways: phenomenal interest in indoor gardening, increased growing of plants in containers for close-up beauty, renewed interest in home grown vegetables and home fruit orchards, to name a few. Home gardening affords a unique—but timeless—relationship between man, plants and the environment.

In California, there are so many ornamental trees and shrubs to enjoy, all four seasons of the year, that it is no wonder gardeners in the Golden State are the envy of the nation. Fall is an excellent time to plant almost everything in California. Many horticulturists consider it the best planting season. The California Association of Nurserymen points out that fall planting is the key to quick growth.

Fall planting follows the heat of summer. The ground retains the warmth. Shrubs, trees, annuals, perennials and ground covers planted now use the season to good advantage. Root systems develop and become established before the cool season begins. While no top growth may be evident, the developing root systems make it possible for the individual plants to take better advantage of the entire spring growing season. Results will be reflected in more rapid growth, which means you will be able to enjoy beauty and other benefits that much sooner. With shade trees, for instance, this can mean added feet of growth in a single year—thus, more feet of shade.

# CALIFORNIA TREE GUIDE

GROWING CHARACTERISTICS AND DIMENSIONS  
AT MATURITY OF POPULAR CALIFORNIA TREES



# THE HIBISCUS

BILL GUNTHER

HAVE YOU SEEN the hibiscus with a blossom that is red when it opens, then changes to blue before it wilts? Have you seen the hibiscus with variegated foliage? Or the one with the pure white blossom? Or the one with a baby-pink blossom? Many very unusual hibiscus types are available, but there is no such thing as a Hibiscus Society to "push" them, so most of us do not even know they exist.

To most San Diegans, the word "hibiscus" brings to mind only the large old hibiscus plants with red blossoms which abound, almost unattended, all over the older sections of town. The origin of these plants is interesting: Years ago, during the steamship era, every tourist on every steamship which docked in Honolulu was draped with a complimentary lei made from stranded-together blossoms of the bright red form of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*. The tourists then wore their leis ashore for a big evening "on the beach." Those evenings involved such things as champagne, hula girls and beach boys — after which, by association, the red blossomed hibiscus became to tourists a symbol of Hawaiian romance. When holiday time was over, and the tourists returned to California, the hula girls and beach boys had to be left behind. That was decreed by the propriety of that era. But red hibiscus plants were an acceptable substitute souvenir. The plants could be brought back home and planted under the guise of beautification — with the incidental benefit that the red blossoms, when they appeared, would stimulate fond memories of happy days (or nights) in Hawaii.

Thousands and thousands of tourists vacationed in Hawaii during the era of our grandparent's youth, and many thousands of red hibiscus plants were brought

back by them as souvenirs. A good number of those plants remain alive as huge specimen plants in the older parts of town, but they no longer serve to remind the persons who planted them of good times long past, because the people who planted them long ago have taken their memories with them to their graves.

The tourists of that bygone era were not horticulturalists; they did not know the difference between a genus, a species, a form, or a clone. But they knew well that the plant they brought back from Hawaii was a hibiscus, and that it had bright red blossoms, just like their leis. As a result, after three generations, popular opinion still persists to the effect that the name "hibiscus" is applicable only to the red-flowered plant and that any flower which is not red cannot be a true hibiscus.

It now is time for a widening of perspective. It is time for everyone to know that the word "hibiscus" actually is a generic name. It is the name of the Genus, and it includes many different species and many, many different varieties and forms. The red form of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* is just one of the multitude. That one form should not be allowed to forever usurp the generic name to the exclusion of all the other members of the Genus.

The Genus *Hibiscus* includes species which are indigenous to many different areas of the world. Forms and hybrids of these species include plants with single





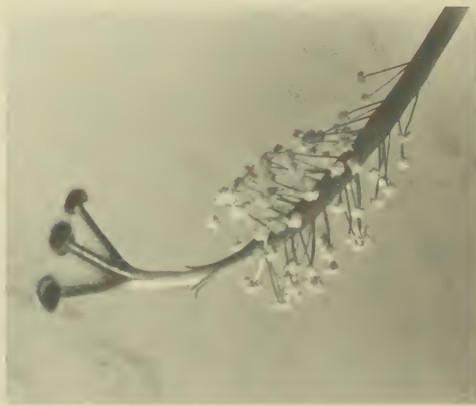
blossoms, double blossoms, and peony-type blossoms. Colors include whites, pinks, yellows, oranges, reds, blues and combinations and variations of those shades. Some hibiscus plants in our gardens are not exotic at all; *Hibiscus lasiocarpus* (which usually is rose colored) is indigenous to California; some nurseries sell this species under the trade name "Hibiscus Californicus." A gardener who wants a white hibiscus can choose from forms of half a dozen species, and from a large number of inter-species hybrids. If you would like a blue hibiscus, ask for *Hibiscus huegelii*. People who would rather eat their hibiscus than admire it should grow *Hibiscus esculentus*, which comes from tropical Asia. You can get it in edible form, without bothering to grow it yourself, by looking on the canned vegetable shelf of any supermarket, where it is sold under the common name "okra."

The plant commonly called the "Confederate Rose" is *Hibiscus mutabilis*; many clones of this species have

blossoms which open white, then change to a red color by evening. The plant which commonly is known as the "Rose of Sharon" is *Hibiscus syriacus*. One form of this species has variegated leaves. Another form has blossoms which first open with a red hue, then change to a blue hue before wilting. To see that form, in San Diego, drive to 2321 Kettner Boulevard, just a few blocks inland from the San Diego Airport. A fine specimen now is in full bloom in the front yard of that address. Admire it a few minutes and maybe you will become so enthusiastic that you will be ready to get out and organize a local Hibiscus Society. Count me in as a charter member.

Adjacent page, at bottom: Contrastingly different types of hibiscus blossoms of the single type are illustrated. At left is the hybrid variety BLUSHING BRIDE; it is a very pastel baby-pink color, without pattern, and its petals are so wide that they overlap to give the blossoms the form of a big crinkled saucer. It is one of the most attractive of hybrid varieties. In contrast, to its right, is a blossom of a species hibiscus; the color is predominantly red, with distinct pattern lines. The petals do not overlap, but protrude in a squared-off fashion which gives the impression of a water wheel.

The compound arrangement of stamens and pistils illustrated at right is a good identification key for the typical garden hibiscus, but there also are atypical hibiscus varieties with floral parts which do not remotely resemble this illustration.



*Hibiscus huegelii*, commonly known as Blue Hibiscus, is an evergreen shrub native to Western Australia with a dark green, finely-cut leaf. Its delicate flowers are lilac-blue, 4 to 5 inches across, have a satin sheen, and are slightly twisted. It blooms periodically throughout the year but heaviest in March and April, doing best in full sun and in soil having good drainage.

It is best propagated from cuttings taken right after flowering and placed in sand in light shade. Seed germination is poor.

*Hibiscus huegelii* was introduced to the nursery trade in 1968 by the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. It is a lovely addition to a garden and requires little care beyond occasional pruning and a light soaking monthly or twice monthly in hot weather.

# now is the time

—A Cultural Calendar of Care from our Affiliates—

## BONSAI SOCIETY

Masao Takanashi

Now is the time

to withhold food if the weather is hot.

to keep moist—but if hot, do not water until the cool of evening, then spray the foliage.

to place some leafy plants under lath to prevent burning.

to repot the flowering quince.

to transplant the willow for the second time. (Remember the willow likes to be repotted twice a year.)

to do repotting if you missed doing the chore in the spring. Prune if necessary. Keep under lath ten or more days—then gradually return to place.

## CACTUS/SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Dr. Leroy Phelps

Now is the time

to keep on the lookout for late flowering mams, neoportias and species epiphyllums.

to give one last feeding, if desired, with a fertilizer low in nitrogen.

to anticipate Santa Ana winds—keep moisture in the soil, but otherwise start hardening plants.

to redesign any part of your garden that is not “just right.”

to sprinkle California poppy seeds for surprises in the spring.

to take advantage of the last chance to repot rootbound plants.

## CAMELLIA SOCIETY

Shala McNeil

Now is the time

to deep water once a week to spray or fog plants in evening when weather is hot. Keep moist but not soggy.

to start “gibbing” hybrids and reticulatas about first of Sept.

to feed for blossoms—use liquid fish product or cotton seed meal lightly—but be sure to have watered thoroughly the day before. Water in the cotton seed meal.

## DAHLIA SOCIETY

Mildred Middleton

Now is the time

to spray to prevent mildew and spider mites.

to maintain regular watering until first of October, then cut down gradually.

to feed with potash only to promote root growth. Also, it helps them keep better during winter.

## EPIPHYLLUM SOCIETY

William Nelson

Now is the time

to keep plants clean and free from insects.

to give plenty of light and air in preparation for hardening off. Harden off by withholding water, but if weather is hot—spray with water for moisture.

to “overhaul” plants—trim out much of the old wood, and can still take cuttings in Sept. although July & August are better months.

to start watering and fertilizing Christmas cactus.

## FUCHSIA SOCIETY

Penny Bunker

Now is the time

to continue misting or fogging foliage especially if weather is hot—do in coolest part of day.

to avoid “overwatering”, to create soggyiness at the root area. More plants are killed by overwatering than anything else—but do not allow to dry out completely. Plants like moist conditions, but not wet.

to keep plants clean of insects—it means constant control on white fly, mites and aphids. Mealy bugs might creep in, also. Use malathion, lindane, cygon E, etc.—but reduce amounts to prevent burning.

to feed with low nitrogen about every ten days or two weeks.

to cut back your plants in October (about 1/3) to keep blooming for Christmas time. Fertilize lightly.

to take cuttings for spring plants. Second best time to prune.

## GERANIUM SOCIETY

Phil Bush

Now is the time

to take cuttings—keep in light shade until rooted.

to fertilize plants with high nitrogen fertilizer—such as ammonia sulphate, fish 10-5-5, etc.

to clean up old plants—clear off dead leaves, flowers, clean soil under plants.

to spray soil and under leaves with cygon E for white fly and aphids, might aid in control of worms, too.

## IRIS SOCIETY

Art Day

Now is the time

to plant beardless irises—spurias, siberians, Louisianas and Japanese. For best results, select a location where they can remain undisturbed for several years. After planting, keep moist until established. Do not let dry out.

to divide old clumps of bearded irises. Retain only those rhizomes with good fans and roots—the old “mother” rhizome will not bloom. Trim fans and roots half way before replanting. Outer leaves will die back—this is normal.

## ORCHID SOCIETY

Virgil Schade

Now is the time

to continue watering and general fertilizing program.

to start fertilizing cymbidium plants that you expect to bloom in the spring—use low nitrogen fertilizer until spring.

to control the insects—red spider, aphids, mealy bugs, scale, slugs and snails.

to check heat controls in green houses for proper operation.

to repot those plants that are not kept in heated houses.

to prepare for Santa Ana winds, low humidity and high temperatures can quickly damage plants.

## ROSE SOCIETY

Dee Thorson

Now is the time

to prune roses moderately for spectacular fall blooms.

to foliar feed roses to snap them out of the summer doldrums.

to supply adequate water during the hot dry weather. Occa-

sional overhead watering is appreciated when the “Devil winds” are prevalent.

to continue spider mite control—one method is to hose off underside of leaves regularly—especially at the bottom of bush.

to continue preventative spraying for mildew.

## THE PLANTSMEN IN THE PARK

tell us

Now is the time

to plant bulbs. Use commercially precooled bulbs for best results with tulips.


to plant in a potting mix of equal parts soil, sand and redwood compost (or shavings) augmented with treble super-phosphate.

to acknowledge need for root space by leaving the upper third of the bulb exposed.

to water well with a soil fungicide to prevent root rot. Cover pots with four or five thicknesses of green saran screening. (Clay pots should be soaked overnight before using, or at least several hours.)

Place in a cool spot out of the light. Do not water again until they show green tips. Remove covering and water with a 10-5-5 fertilizer at half strength. Expose gradually to full sunlight.

Maureen, Renown, Burgundy Lace and Most Miles were particularly effective with this treatment last year and were on display in the lathhouse.

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# THE BOOK SHELF

Reviewed by ROSALIE GARCIA

THE SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION library now has an almost complete set of the Time-Life Encyclopedia of Gardening (see reviews in the last issue of California Garden) by James Underwood Crockett and Time-Life Editors. Each volume has about 150 pages: \$5.95 for individual volumes and much less for the set. About 50 pages of water colors by excellent artists: Rebecca Merrilees, Barbara Wolf, John Murphy and Allinora Rosse make these books beautiful and treasures of art in identifying varieties. Mr. Crockett's relaxed style in layman's language immediately establishes him as a friend of the ordinary gardener who has been through their problems and found answers to them.

Landscape Gardening: a valuable asset for following its purpose in landscaping which is "the creation of a pleasant, functional, personal environment". Color pictures of real gardens and an analysis of how these gardens fit into the purpose help one understand what the modern trend is and how to bring it about in small gardens. A great variety of plants for permanent planting is pictured in color. An emphasis on the size they will reach may help the amateur to keep his garden from being a jungle in a few years.

Evergreens: this volume has more of what I do not know than the others. As Mr. Crockett says, all evergreens are not green, but he makes a good case for those that are not and helps distinguish them. He classifies an evergreen as one that holds its foliage in the dormant state. The narrow-leaved, which includes the 500 conifers, and the broad-leaved such as magnolias and camellias, are the two broad classifications. The focus of the book is on the use and culture of evergreens in landscaping and the varieties that suite the climate in which each is used. There are pictures of green gardens, tables showing height, flower color, leaf size, soil needs and uses. The paintings show the shape, cone, blossom, leaf and needle in detail. A section on pests with colored

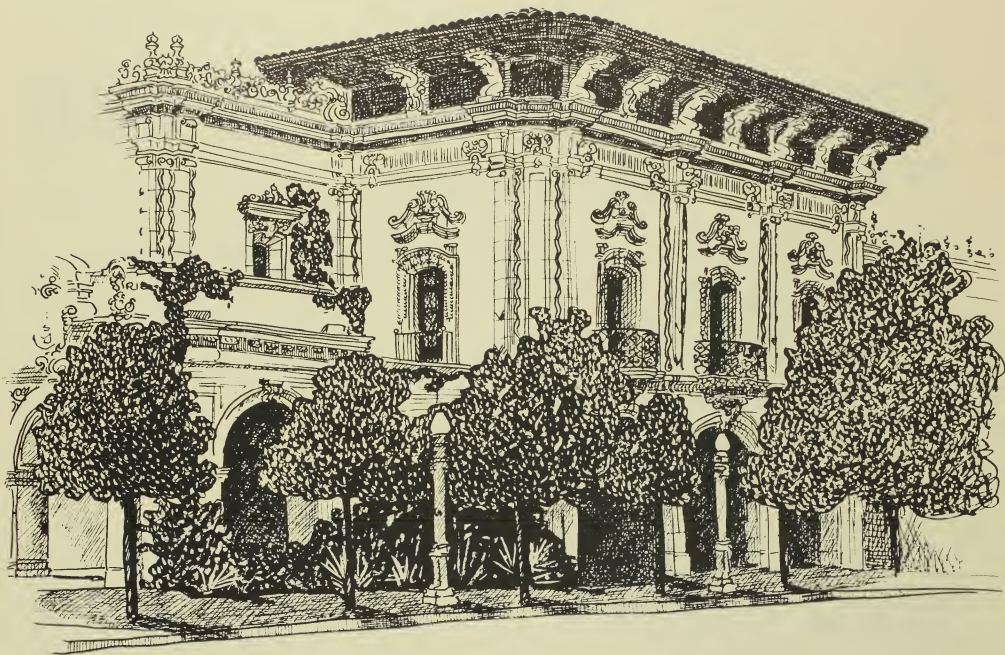
pictures of the bugs and means of control make fine reference material when needed.

Roses: this book covers the history and symbolism that has accrued over the years on this garden favorite. The section on "Old Roses" with its beautiful paintings is the best assembly of facts I know in any recent book. All the different forms of roses including tree, bush, pillar, climbing, little and big are illustrated in actual gardens in color. Tables of characteristics of 344 named varieties present instant information. A chapter on propagation and hybridizing with family trees of some of the best known roses is presented so an amateur can understand. Just about anything one would want to know about roses is here.

Flowering House Plants: beautiful water colors of 130 house plants make this book a treasure for identifying and selecting. Detailed instructions on soil, watering, use of light, propagating and fertilizing are all organized for reference and study. Landscaping with plants in sections of the house gives inspiration and ideas of how to display plants to best advantage for their growth and decorative use by the pot gardener. Even the African Violets in pink and purple on the cover are lovely enough to set up and enjoy.

FLORA OF THE PRAIRIES AND PLAINS OF NORTH CENTRAL AMERICA, Vol. I and Vol. II, Per Axel Rydberg, Dover Press 1972, 967 pp.

This series of encyclopedic information on nearly every species of flora from fern upwards that grows wild from Illinois west to Colorado and north to Montana and the southern sections of Manitoba and Saskatchewan remains an enduring source for the botanical or nature library. Once again Dover Publications of New York has made it possible for the average layman to possess books that were out of print and rare.



THE ELECTRIC BUILDING on the PRADO, BALBOA PARK

IN 1911, SAN DIEGO, with a population of 35,000, began working on a plan for the Grand Panama Exposition, which was held in San Diego in 1915 to celebrate the completion of the Panama Canal. Because the Exposition was to express the Spanish heritage of California, Bertram Goodhue, the world's foremost authority of Spanish Colonial Architecture, was selected to design the buildings.

Mr. Goodhue wanted the Exposition complex to resemble a small Spanish city which would be entered over an arched bridge similar to that over the Tagus River in Toledo. Arcades lining a main thoroughfare would allow glimpses of balconies, ornamental facades, patios, domes, towers, lush gardens, pools and fountains. It was to be a dream city glorifying the romantic, in a setting of gardens. The architecture was to be based upon that which had evolved in Mexico after the conquest by Cortez. This was an adaptation of the Spanish Churrigueresque Baroque with its strong Moorish heritage, and with lavish and intricate carving.

One of the most prominent and most beautiful of the buildings in this dream city was known in 1915 as the Canadian Building and later as the Electric Building. This splendid but decaying building is directly across the Prado from the newly rebuilt Casa del Prado; it now houses the Aerospace Museum.

The inspiration for this romantic building was the Casa Consistorial at Palma, Majorca. The elaborate tower of the Electric Building and the tower of the House of Hospitality balance each other, forming the chief focal point of the famous vista across from the lily pool. Bertram Goodhue saw to it that the buildings worked in harmony with one another and with the landscape. The most interesting ornamental details of the Electric Building are the masks made of elements of foliage and the balcony railings in splendidly-wrought iron.

Balboa Park has become the cultural center of San Diego. El Prado, with its museums, cultural institutions and zoo all within walking distance, is so unique in the United States that in 1967 the Prado area was declared an Historic Site. The magnificent Electric Building is a component of that Historic Site. But because it was not built of permanent materials, it now is highly deteriorated. The time has come to decide whether it should be demolished, and the site made into a parking lot, or whether the grand old building should be rebuilt of permanent materials, and renamed the Casa del Pacifico. Whether it (like the Casa del Prado) will become a permanent part of the Historic Site, and a heritage for the future of San Diego, will be decided by the voters when they cast their ballots next November 7.

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Pres: George French 223-8258  
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Pres: Mrs. H.C. Gibson 745-3425  
16025 Vesper Rd., Valley Center 92082

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Pres: Mrs. Ed Shivers 728-8015  
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## **GREEN VALLE GARDEN CLUB, POWAY**

Pres: Mrs. Charles E. Chandler 487-2203  
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## **GROSSMONT GARDEN CLUB**

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8059 Culowee, La Mesa 92041

## **HIPS & THORNS**

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## **IMPERIAL BEACH GARDEN CLUB**

Pres: Mrs. Karl L. Goodwalt 424-5066  
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## **LA JOLLA NEWCOMERS (Gardeners)**

Chairman: Mrs. Don Sanson 454-4616  
1466 Torrey Pines Rd., L.J. 92037

## **LAKE SAN MARCOS GARDEN CLUB**

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1489 San Pablo Dr., Lake San Marcos

## **LAKESIDE GARDEN CLUB**

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## **LA MESA GARDEN CLUB**

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## **NATIONAL FUCHSIA SOCIETY,**

**ENCINITAS BRANCH**  
Pres: Jim Campbell 278-4372  
2903 Greyling Drive, San Diego 92123

## **NORTH COUNTY ROSE SOCIETY**

Pres: Paul B. Marner 745-0797  
525 W. El Norte Parkway, Sp. 31,  
Escondido 92025

## **NORTH CO. SHADE PLANT CLUB**

Pres: Edward Olsen 722-0966  
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## **O. C. IT GROW GARDEN CLUB**

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1409 Division, Oceanside 92054

## **PACIFIC BEACH GARDEN CLUB**

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## **PALOMAR CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOC.**

Pres: Harold Marino 748-2563  
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## **PALOMAR ORCHID SOCIETY**

Pres: Jess Schiffer 724-4743  
872 Newport Dr., Vista 92083

## **POWAY VALLEY GARDEN CLUB**

Pres: Mrs. Warren Bandrow 748-4460  
13838 Savage Road, Poway 92064

## **QUAIL GARDENS FOUNDATION, INC.**

Pres: Mrs. M.J. von Freisig 286-8818  
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## **RANCHO SANTA FE GARDEN CLUB**

Pres: Wilfred S. Teetzel  
Box 1314, Rancho Santa Fe 92067

## **SAN CARLOS GARDEN CLUB**

Pres: Mrs. Paul Hebert 463-9575  
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## **SAN DIEGO BROMELIAD SOCIETY**

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6070 Sarita, La Mesa 92041

## **S.D. CHAPTER CALIF' ASS'N. NURSERY-**

**MEN**  
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5115 Linda Vista Rd., San Diego 92110

## **S.D. CHAPTER CALIF. NATIVE PLANT**

**SOCIETY**  
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## **SAN DIEGUITO GARDEN CLUB**

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**BEGONIA SOCIETY**  
Pres: Mrs. George W. Bayse, Jr. 420-8913  
1318 Judson Way, Chula Vista 92011

## **SANTÉE WOMEN'S CLUB (Garden Sec)**

Pres: Mrs. Morris Kanefsky 448-2177  
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## **SOLAR GARDEN CLUB**

Pres: Jim Campbell 278-4372  
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## **VISTA GARDEN CLUB**

Pres: Mrs. L.G. Farrell 724-6019  
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## **VISTA MESA GARDEN CLUB**

Pres: Mrs. Frances Wray 277-8136  
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San Diego Floral Association  
Casa Del Prado, Balboa Park  
San Diego, CA 92101

## CONSIDER

Flowers are in many ways  
similar to people;  
they are born,  
they bloom,  
and they die,  
hoping only that someone  
might appreciate them  
somewhere along the way.

Roy D. Hamilton